3: Bahrain G-5 (1950) 1950 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

BAHRAIN'S SECOND CENSUS

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THE 1359 (1941) CENSUS. The first General Census of Bahrain was taken on the 22nd January 1941. Previous to this there were no accurate figures about the population of Bahrain although figures were given in various books of reference showing the number of inhabitants as being as much as 200,000. The basis of these estimates, which were so wide of the mark, is not known; they were not calculated from the numbers of births and deaths because the registration of births and deaths is not yet compulsory in Bahrain, it is however a measure which the Government hopes soon to introduce.

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In 1359 the Government announced by proclamation that there was to be a counting of the people. The news was received with disapproval and suspicion by a large proportion of the community. Few people, except those who had been abroad, believed that the only reason for the census was because the Government wanted to know how many people lived in the country. Many rumours, some of them very wild, became current, especially in the villages. It was said that conscription was to be introduced, that taxation was to be imposed, that a municipality was to be set up in every village and, finally, that no woman in future would be allowed to give birth to a child except in one of the Government hospitals. Some of the rumours were deliberately spread by mischief makers. Another factor which affected the census was the rationing system which allowed a larger ration of cereals to adults than to children under a certain age. Eventually after many public meetings, talks from the Bahrain Broadcasting Station, which was then in action, articles in the local paper and intensive propaganda intended to remove doubts and suspicion this first census was carried out.

563 167 Indians and Pakistanis (3,043) mostly living in Manamah, were the next largest foreign community followed by Saudi-Arabians (2,526) who included many Hassawis employed as agricultural labourers; Omanis, Muscatis and Arabs from the Trucial Coast (2,466) were mostly people who entered Bahrain in recent years seeking work; British, Americans and other Europeans numbered 1,683, this total does not include ships crews at Sitra and at Jufair (584). In Manamah and Muharraq the British and American population was 270, including R.A.F. personnel. Other nationalities included Iraqis (224), Qataris (438), Kuwaitis (149), Yemenis (105). In the population of Bahrain at the time of the census over 30 nationalities were represented.

● [208] 745 Owing to local feeling Sunnis and Shias were not registered separately but sectarial distribution outside Manamah and Muharraq is sharply defined. The Shia villages contain no Sunnis and the Sunni villages contain very few Shias. Muharraq contains a small number of Shia Baharna, who are scarcely distinguishable from the Arabs and a long established community of Persian Shias. In Manamah the Shias, both Baharna and Persians, are a large and important section of the population; certain quarters of the town are inhabited almost exclusively by Baharna and some of the suburbs are occupied almost entirely by Persians.

115 162 Bahrain is predominantly Moslem. There are less than 4,000 persons belonging to other religions, of these 2,348 are Christians, not including men on ships in the harbours, 293 are Jews and 975 are Hindus.

AGE AND SEX.

162 Reliable information about ages was difficult to obtain because few of the local inhabitants knew their own ages. There is as yet no registration of births

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

609 foreigners are "kept in their place" there circulate by word of mouth — a method of communication highly developed in the Middle East — and exaggerated several times in the process. One of the central themes of the local Bahrain press is a comparison between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain in this respect. As is to be expected, this is causing a feeling of frustration among the natives and creating an atmosphere of restiveness and increasing antagonism toward foreigners.

In Kuwait a rather ambitious development program has been under way for several years, made possible by increasing oil royalties. There is an atmosphere of feverish activity, psychologically exaggerated because of its concentration in a small area. By contrast, life in Bahrain is slow and development sober but limited, in view of the comparatively small oil revenues. This causes some jealousy which finds an emotional outlet in an increasing suspicion of foreigners and increasing demands on the major companies, such as the Bahrain Petroleum Company, to do more for the country than they have been doing so far.

FOREIGN ARAB GROUPS

563 167 463 A rather large number of foreign Arabs live in Bahrain. They can be divided into two main groups which in custom and social mores have little in common. The first group is composed of Arabs from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Muscat, Qatar, and Yemen. These people have always been part of the scene. They come and go as they have always done, with hardly any restriction on their movement. Many of them are related to people in Bahrain by blood or marriage and are looked upon as "cousins," *awlad al-'amm*, a term which carries with it all the emotional overtones of the traditions of tribal life. Some of them are merchants; a large number, especially of those from Oman, Muscat, Qatar, and Yemen, are employed by the oil industry as common laborers, and others work with local industries. Their community life and standard of living do not vary a great deal from that of the local population; in fact they are hardly distinguishable from it.

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The second group of foreign Arabs, made up of a small number of Egyptians, Syrians, Lebanese, Iraqis, and Palestinians, is comparatively new to the area. On the whole, their standard of living is probably higher than that of any other group with the exception of the Westerners. Few are engaged in trade; the majority are white-collar workers.

563 875 ● 208 177 Although they are largely new arrivals, they already exert considerable influence on the life of the country. Unlike all other foreigners, they are genuinely welcomed and looked up to by the local population. They are the missionaries of Arab nationalism. Most of the high-school and a good number of the elementary-school teachers in Bahrain come from this group (see Table IV); in this key position, it can be truly said of them that they

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are the moulders of the new generation of Bahrainis. It is significant that all these teachers come from countries which have just emerged from British or French control.

TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE

Social realignment among the Sunnis and the Shi'is must be thought of in terms of the distant future. It is true that secular and technical education, nationalism, and economic forces are all operating to bring these two groups together. As a result they have begun to cooperate with each other in certain areas of common interest as nonreligious groups; nevertheless, the old loyalties and social patterns are still strongly entrenched, as is very graphically illustrated by the religious riots of 1953 and 1954. It is even conceivable that when and if religion loses the depth of meaning it has at present to both groups, it may still remain as the basis of political alignment or power, as is the case in highly literate Lebanon.

Nationalism has replaced religious tradition as the basis of the relations of the Jews with the major segments of society. The resultant tension is being resolved through emigration, but a few will no doubt remain. All indications are that the political struggle between the Arabs and Israel will leave them little chance of reintegrating themselves on some new basis into society in Bahrain. It is possible, although highly improbable thanks to the presence of the British, that mass violence may be used against them. If this does take place, the problem in all likelihood will assume an international character. Israel, which has established itself as the protector and defender of Jewish minorities, no doubt would use every measure to dramatize the plight of this minority to the world.

The animosity of the native population toward Persians and Indians does not arise from fundamental issues of a permanent nature. There is, for instance, no parallel feeling toward Iran, India, or Pakistan; on the contrary, warm sympathy prevails for them as combatants against Western domination. Both the causes and the issues are transitory in character, and

Table IV. FOREIGN TEACHERS IN BAHRAIN

Year	*Egypt*	*Syria*	*Lebanon*	*Palestine*	*Other Arab Countries*	*Other Nationalities*	*Total*
1944/45.....	12	2	12	—	—	2	28
1945/46.....	10	—	13	..	1	2	26
1946/47.....	13	9	12	—	1	2	37
1947/48.....	11	7	14	—	1	2	35
1948/49.....	22	6	14	—	1	3	46
1949/50.....	20	7	14	9	1	3	54
1950/51.....	9	9	15	10	1	3	47
1951/52.....	9	7	27	18	2	4	67

Source: Government of Bahrain, Dept. of Education, *Report on the Condition of Education in Bahrain* (Bahrain, 1952), p. 47. (In Arabic.)